



# BCSS NORTHWEST NEWSLETTER

Spring 2010

Northwest BC area

## Special points of interest:

- What's new at BCSS Northwest?
- Conferences and workshops.
- New faces in the Northwest.
- New programs in the Northwest.

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## BC Schizophrenia Society offices have a new name!

The BCSS offices in the Northwest service area are implementing a name change.

We are now called:

### **MENTAL HEALTH FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE.**

We feel that this name is a better descriptor of the range of services that we provide and the variety of people that may access our services. We would like to reach families of individuals with all mental illnesses and hope that the name change will help to broaden the scope of

people that come to us for education and support. The Mental Health Family Resource Centre remains under the BC Schizophrenia Society umbrella and can be found on the Society website as always. The services remain the same, only the name has changed. If you have questions or concerns please give us a call at :

1-866-326-7877

or email:

[bcsterr@telus.net](mailto:bcsterr@telus.net)

**Please help us  
spread the  
word about the  
name change  
to all of your  
community  
members!**



## TERRACE OFFICE HAS MOVED

We have relocated our Terrace office to the Trigo building on Park Avenue. We are now located in suite 210-4546 Park Avenue above Trigo's shoe store. If you would like to borrow resources or

drop by for a chat, give us a call. We have acquired some great new resources over the past year. If you are looking for some up to date information about your family members illness come in and

check out our lending library. The Terrace office provides services to families in Kitimat, Terrace, Prince Rupert and the surrounding area. Our toll free number is:

1-866-326-7877

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**PROGRAM UPDATES**

Our public education programs, Partnership Education Presentations (PEP) and Partnership Puppet Show are very active and we have now added the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Support Group Facilitator Training to the education programs that we offer to the public.

For those of you who haven't seen a PEP, it is a story telling method of providing basic education about the major mental illnesses. It involves a brief overview of mental illness followed by a short video. Then the panel of presenters (family member, individual with mental illness and a Mental Health professional) tell their story and we finish up by fielding questions from the audience. It is a much more personalized method of educating than lectures or power point presentations.

The NAMI Peer Support Group Facilitator Training is excellent training for anyone who would like to improve their group facilitation skills. The length of training time is flexible and the use for this training has great cross over possibilities. If you or a community group would be interested in this training please give us a call at 1-866-326-7877.

(For an update on the puppet show check out page 3)



**FAMILY ROOM GETS A FACELIFT**

The family room in the Mills Memorial psychiatric unit has gotten a facelift. The room has been cleaned and painted by hospital maintenance, newly decorated and stocked with videos and literature. We have added in some local artwork for color and a desk as well. We hope that families will find the room a relaxing environment for visiting with family members on the unit. If we are missing information in the library on a topic of



interest to you please let us know or leave a note in the family room and we will try to find it for you. You will also find our BCSS brochures and referral forms in the family room. A referral is not necessary to access our services but you can use the form to

provide your name and phone number and we will contact you to see what your needs are. Just fill out as much of the form as you like and ask the psychiatric unit staff to fax it to us or you can just give us a call to set up an appointment. The regional coordinator will be in the family room the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 3:00pm. if you want to stop by to set up an office appointment.

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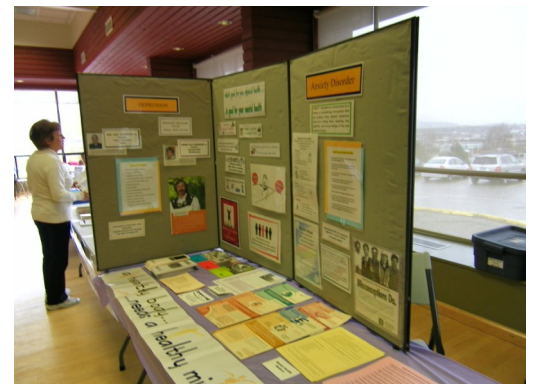
We're on the web!  
www.bcss.org

**NEW SCRIPT FOR PUPPET SHOW!**

We are thrilled to announce a new puppet show script is on the way! The new script gives a much needed update to the information presented to our young audiences. It provides more detail on psychosis and how it affects the individual and the effects on family and friends of the individual. The new script also describes what the family should do and tells children that mental illness is an illness that happens to be in the brain so it manifests differently from illnesses in the rest of the body. The show has been performing in many of the Coast Mountain School District community schools and for some agencies as well. The show is for children aged 8 to 11. The presentation is provided free of charge to the schools and is a partnership program between the Mental Health Family Resource Centre (BCSS), Mental Health & Addictions services, Child & Youth Mental Health and community performers known as the TTOP's. Below are pictures of the puppets recent performances of Brother Where Are You?. We will start working with the new script over the summer and begin public performances of What Are Friends For? in the next school year.



Above: TTOP's perform Brother Where Are You? in Prince Rupert.  
Below: Dr. Giede and Leah Domoney at a conference held in Terrace on the topic of mental illness in children. Dr. Giede is a child psychiatrist at Prince George hospital.  
Bottom Right: BCSS booth at the Health Fair in Terrace.



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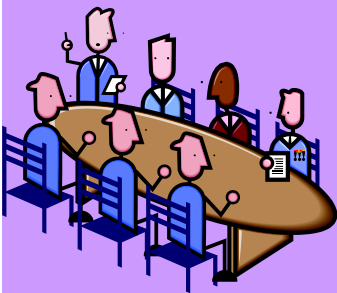
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**SUPPORT GROUPS AND FAMILY EDUCATION**

*Family support groups* are active in Terrace and Kitimat. The Terrace group meets the 3rd Tuesday of every month (except July, August, December) at 102-4450 Grieg Ave. at 7:30pm and the Kitimat group meets the last Monday of every month at 564 Mountainview Square at 7:00pm. The Prince Rupert group meetings have been suspended temporarily due to lack of attendance. If you live in Prince Rupert and would like support please call us and we will arrange for you to meet with a peer support family. Many thanks to our volunteer families!



*Free Strengthening Families Together* educational classes are available for families in Kitimat. If you are interested in signing up for a set of five classes this fall please give us a call at: 1-866-326-7877 or email: bcsterr@telus.net

*Family to Family* classes are available in Terrace for families wanting to learn more about their family members mental illness. Give us a call if you would like to take the classes and we will contact you when the next series of classes are scheduled. A Family to Family Alumni celebration was held in Terrace on March 31st in honor of the 15 year anniversary since the Family to Family education classes were first offered here by Eileen Callanan. Congratulations on 15 successful years of educating families!

**MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

The *Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Committee (MH&AAC)* acts in an advisory and advocacy role to the local Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA) and to Regional Health Authorities in relation to the provision of Mental Health & Addictions services.

In laymen's terms this means that the committees allow the community to have a voice in Mental Health & Addictions services and in promoting the needs of Mental Health clients and families in

our communities.

The groups meet monthly and are comprised of family members, individuals with mental illness and service providers.

Several representative members from each communities' Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Committees meet quarterly to network with other communities. The members meet via videoconference. This committee is called the Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA) Committee.

Delegates from this committee will represent the HSDA by sitting on a regional committee that will meet face to face once a year. This may seem like a lot of committee meetings but in fact the time commitment for members is typically only a few hours each month.

Connecting with other communities in our area and region is a great opportunity to get to know what is happening in the Northwest at large.

*(Continued on page 5)*

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**MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONTINUED**

Continued from page 4

Having a regional committee allows us to gain access to information on how other communities have made improvements to their Mental Health & Addictions services or ways they have found to address community issues that we may also struggle with. It is also a chance to identify common areas of concern in the area of Mental Health and Addictions in each of our communities and to bring those issues to the attention of the Mental Health management team for our region.

**The Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Committees  
are always looking for more members.**

If you would like to join the committee or would like more information please contact Mental Health & Addictions services in your community or contact our office at 1-866-326-7877.

**Orientation will be offered to new committee members.**

**CONSUMER & FAMILY INITIATIVE FUNDS COMMITTEE**

*The Consumer & Family Initiative Funds Committee (C&FIF) is a subcommittee of the Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Committee. It also consists of family members, consumers and Mental Health Service providers. The committee receives funds each year from Northern Health. The funds are used to finance various endeavors related to mental illness and addictions. For instance, consumers might apply for funding for bursaries or families might request funds to attend conferences on topics related to mental illness or the money might be used to fund community educational projects*

about mental illness. This committee contains members who also sit on the Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Committee (MH&AAC). The C&FIF committee also meets once a month, usually right after the MH&AAC meets.

If you would like to join this committee please give us a call. Orientation is provided for new committee members.



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## **MESSAGE FROM THE BCSS NORTHWEST AREA MANAGER**

Hello all:

It is with much regret that I have to report that I am leaving both the BCSS and the NW of BC. My husband has taken a transfer with his job so we will be moving at the end of June.

There are many things I will miss about both my position and the area. I have had the privilege of meeting and working with some really nice, caring people. I have been lucky enough to meet people who were willing to share their very personal stories so that I could both learn and impart their knowledge and experiences onto others. I have really enjoyed the diversity of the NW; the way each community has it's own personality and culture. And the fresh halibut and salmon; I confess that I will miss that, too!!

I am not sure what my new life will bring but, you can rest assured, I will continue to carry the message of educating others about mental illness in hopes of breaking down stigma and discrimination. I feel that that is the least I can do to honour the experiences of the people I have met.

Best wishes to you all and thank you for making my time with BCSS so wonderful,

Leah Domoney

## **MESSAGE FROM THE BCSS NORTHWEST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

"Your work is to discover your world and then with all your heart give yourself to it" (Buddha). Leah has immersed herself in her work with BCSS and I imagine will do the same in the next "world" she discovers. We will miss Leah very much and are sad to see her go. The Domoney family have contributed countless volunteer hours to our community and this loss will certainly be felt by many local clubs and groups in Terrace as well. We wish Leah all the best in relocating to a new community. It's members will benefit greatly from her kind, caring nature and the wealth of knowledge and experience she brings with her.

I have chosen to take on Leah's position when she moves next month. I will take over the duties as Northwest Area Manager in June. We will have a new NW Regional Coordinator in place shortly as well. Leah and I will work together to make these changes and transition as seamless as possible so families and friends of individuals with mental illness continue to receive all Mental Health Family Resource Centre services as usual. I look forward to the new challenges and learning opportunities that this change will bring.

Dolly Hall